

Norman Epstein fonds

Compiled by Erwin Wodarczak (2023)



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Fonds Description

Norman Epstein fonds. – 1944-2022.

1.02 m of textual records.

14 photographs.

1 CD.

Biographical Sketch

Norman Epstein was a long-time faculty member in the UBC Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering, and one of Canada's best-known chemical engineers. Born in Montreal in 1923, Epstein earned bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering at McGill (1945, 1946), and a doctorate in engineering science from New York University (1953). He started work at UBC in 1951 as an instructor in chemical engineering, and became an assistant professor in 1954. He was promoted to full professor in 1965, and was named professor emeritus upon his retirement in 1988. He continued to publish and present at professional conferences for many years after his "retirement".

Epstein was a leader in research in the areas of spouted beds, heat exchanger fouling, liquid-solid and three-phase fluidization, and dynamic particulate processes such as sedimentation. The book *Spouted Beds*, which he co-wrote with Kishan B. Mathur and published in 1974, remains an authoritative text on the subject. Within his department Epstein was respected as a leader who fostered an inclusive departmental and professional community in support of learning and scholarship, as well as both professional and community service. He also taught in UBC's first-year Arts One programme. He was editor of *The Canadian Journal of Chemical Engineering* from 1985 to 1990, and served on many committees and executives for the Chemical Institute of Canada and the Canadian Society for Chemical Engineering. For his many professional contributions Epstein was honoured with the Jules Stachiewicz Medal in 1988 and the R.S. Jane Memorial Lecture Award in 1989. Also, when UBC Chemical and Biological Engineering moved into a new building in 2006, the new departmental reading room was named in his honour.

Outside his professional activities Epstein was an active member of the UBC Faculty Association, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, Amnesty International, and Engineers for Nuclear Disarmament. He spoke on various social and political topics, such as socialism, anarchism, anti-Semitism, Arab-Israeli relations, and the Cold War, and corresponded regularly with prominent social critic Noam Chomsky. Epstein died in July 2023, just a few months shy of his 100th birthday.

Scope and Content

Fonds consists of materials documenting Norman Epstein's professional and personal life and interests, and includes correspondence, speaker's notes, off-prints of Epstein's professional articles, publications (including books), newspaper and magazine clippings, photographs, and one CD. They are arranged in the following series: Professional Work, UBC, Speeches, Correspondence, Subject Files, and Photographs and Other Media.

Notes

File list available.

Donated by Norman Epstein's son Eric Epstein in September 2023.

Series Descriptions

Professional Work series. – 1944-2013.

35.5 cm of textual records.

Series consists of materials documenting Epstein's professional career and activities, and includes copies of his degree dissertations, copies and off-prints of his articles, a copy of his book *Spouted Beds* along with the Russian translation, scholarly publications that Epstein edited or which included his work, correspondence, other writings, his CV, his awards and honours, and other writings.

Materials are arranged in chronological order. The articles are kept in numbered order presumably arranged by Epstein.

UBC series. – 1956-2006.

8.5 cm of textual records.

Series consists of materials documenting Epstein's activities and interests at the University of British Columbia, and includes correspondence, reports, other writings, and publications.

Materials are arranged in chronological order.

Speeches series. – 1958-1996.

12 cm of textual records.

Series consists of notes for Epstein's public speeches, and includes index cards with his handwritten notes. The speeches are on a wide variety of topics, including politics, current events, and social issues, and reflect Epstein's interests and opinions in these areas.

Materials are arranged in approximately chronological order, taking into account the sizes of the cards and how many are used for each speech.

Correspondence series. – 1963-2022.

17 cm of textual records.

Series consists of letters and other correspondence received by Epstein, and copies of some correspondence sent by him. Notable is correspondence with noted social critic Noam Chomsky, including discussions about the latter's visits to UBC; and correspondence with fellow UBC faculty member Werner Cohn regarding their differing views on Israeli-Arab relations.

Materials are arranged primarily alphabetically by correspondent surname, except for those files containing correspondence from various persons, which are arranged chronologically.

Subject Files series. – 1944-2017.

29 cm of textual records.

Series consists textual materials acquired or created by Norman Epstein on a variety of subjects and topics of interest, and includes correspondence, other writings by Epstein, publications, and published items including clippings and website printouts.

Materials are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Photographs and Other Media series. – 1975-2008.

14 photographs.

1 CD.

Series consists of non-textual records created or acquired by Epstein, and includes photographs and one CD. The photographs are all prints, some colour and some black-and-white, and depict Epstein at various events together with colleagues and friends. The CD documents Epstein's presentation at a Canadian Society of Chemical Engineers conference in Edmonton in 2007.

File List

BOX 1

PROFESSIONAL WORK

- 1-1 "Testing rubber compounds" by Norman Epstein Eng. '45 October 1944
- 1-1a [Norman Epstein's unofficial transcript from McGill University] February 1948
 - originally found with file 1-5
- 1-2 [Articles and off-prints] 1948-2020 [7 folders]
 - numbered 1-243
- 1-3 New York University College of Engineering Research Division – 1951 Annual Report 1951
 - includes photo of Norman Epstein doing a fluidization study on p. 10
- 1-4 "Fluid flow through assemblages of spheres" by Norman Epstein September 1953
 - PhD dissertation, NYU
- 1-5 Unlisted [articles and other writings] 1953-2017
- 1-6 Chemical and Engineering News January 1954
 - work Norman Epstein and John Heppel cited, p. 136
- 1-7 [Chemical engineering miscellany] 1967-2011 [found loose]
 - professional correspondence, clippings, conference materials
- 1-8 [Chemical engineering miscellany] 1970-77 [found loose]
 - professional correspondence, clippings, conference materials
- 1-9 [Awards and distinctions] 1973-2016
 - Fellow of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers
 - Emeritus and Honorary Professor, UBC Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering
 - Dean's Medal of Distinction, UBC Faculty of Applied Science
 - endowment: Norman Epstein Award in Chemical Engineering
- 1-10 "Spouted Beds" – Kishan B. Mathur, Norman Epstein 1974
- 1-11 ["Spouted Beds", Russian Translation] 1978
- 1-12 Norman Epstein – CV 1991
- 1-13 Canadian Journal of Chemical Engineering – Vol. 70, No. 5 October 1992
 - introduction and overview by Norman Epstein
- 1-14 The Canadian Journal of Chemical Engineering – Vol. 78, No. 1 February 2000
 - "Special issue in honour of Dr. Norman Epstein"

- 1-15 "Spouted and Spout-Fluid Beds – Fundamentals and applications" – Norman Epstein, John R. Grace (eds.) 2011
- 1-16 [Miscellaneous correspondence and writings] 2011-13 [found loose]
- 1-17 [Miscellaneous] [n.d.] [found loose]

UBC

- 1-18 "Slipstick" 1956
- 1-19 Faculty Association 1960-77
- 1-20 Boycott of California Grapes 1969-73
- 1-21 Arts One / Seminar A4 – 1st term 1970

BOX 2

- 2-1 Miscellany, UBC [ca. 1970-2012] [removed from envelope]
- 2-2 [Published Tributes] 1980-2009 [found loose]
- 2-3 Financial Exigency [UBC Faculty Association] 1984-85
- 2-4 Motion re Palestinian Univ'y Closures 1984, 1989-90
- 2-5 Honorary Life Membership [UBC Faculty Association] 1989
- 2-6 "Chemical and Biological Engineering – University of British Columbia – A History" March 2006
- 2-7 NE [Norman Epstein] Reading Room 2006
- 2-8 "Toast for Norman Epstein" [n.d.]

SPEECHES

- 2-9 [Speeches 1 – index cards] 1960-71
- Fromm, Anarchism vs. Marxism, Limitations in the pursuit of knowledge, Some problems confronting radicals today, War objectors of World War II, Rationale for interest in Doukhobors, Politics and modern society, Anti-Semitism
- 2-10 [Speeches 2 – index cards] 1964-76
- Libertarian vs. Authoritarian Communism (3), Anarchist views on socialism, Workers' control, The worship of technology, The political meaning of anti-Americanism
- 2-11 [Speeches 3 – index cards] 1958-85
- Subversive activity behind the Iron Curtain, Friends: Apologies to F.D.R...,

- Ideology of state capitalism, Are engineering and social dissent compatible?,
Some prevalent brainwashing, The deskilling of labour
- 2-12 [Speeches 4 – index cards] 1971-91
- Thorstein Veblen, the engineers and the price system, “I have a voice but no
vote...”, Anarchy, Development in Cuba, The case against the Gulf War, In
commemoration of the second anniversary of the Intifada
- 2-13 [Speeches 5 – index cards] 1983-96
- Work – Is it necessary?, Opposing the occupation, Israel and the Middle
East negotiations, The deportation on Dec. 16 of 415 Palestinians..., How
Israel was born
- 2-14 [How should Canadians regard U.S. draft evaders in Canada?] 1967

CORRESPONDENCE

- 2-15 Chomsky / Cohn / Epstein 1985-95
- 2-16 Misc. – Chomsky etc. 1986-98
- 2-17 Chomsky – Correspondence 1986-2000
- 2-18 Chomsky Visit, Winter 1996, March 20-21, 2004 1995-2004
- 2-19 Correspondence between Norman Epstein and Werner Cohn 1968-85, 2001
- 2-20 John Doheny 1998-99
- 2-21 Grant Fairley, 1920-2003 1963-2003
- 2-22 (Abie) Roni Gechtman 2000-08
- mostly copies and off-prints of articles by Gechtman
- 2-23 [Mark Leier] 2006-07
- 2-24 [Lowell and Virginia Naeve – correspondence] 2001-04 [found loose]
- 2-25 [Jo An Segal – correspondence] 2015-22 [found loose]
- 2-26 [Norman Epstein – personal] 1979-2013
- 2-27 [Personal correspondence] 1983-2003 [found loose]
- 2-28 Misc. Correspondence – Norman 1991-2009 [2 folders]
- 2-29 [Personal correspondence] 1992-2015 [found loose]

SUBJECT FILES

- 2-30 [Articles and correspondence] 1982-2017 [found loose]
- 2-31 Articles & Letters to Publications / O’Keefe 1988-2017 [2 folders]

BOX 3

- 3-1 C.C.F. research analysis 1944-58
- 3-2 C.I.S.M., etc. – Committee for an Independent Socialist Magazine [ca. 1956-61]
- 3-3 Committee of 100 1961-64 [2 folders]
- 3-4 Committee of Concerned Academics 1983-84
- 3-5 Committee to Aid American War Objectors 1966-67
- 3-6 “Correspondence” [published pamphlet series] 1955-56
 - #1 Union committeemen and wildcat strikes
 - #2 Every cook can govern – A study of democracy in ancient Greece
- 3-7 [Israel/Palestine] 1987-88
- 3-8 [Israel] Socialist Studies, [University of] Victoria – Zionism, Israel & Palestine 1990
- 3-9 [Israel] 1993-94
- 3-10 [Israel] Norman – Politics/Israel / Passos 1995-2013
- 3-11 [Israel/Zionism] 2001-05

BOX 4

- 4-1 [Israel?] “The Bus of Peace” [n.d.] [found loose]
 - print-outs of photos with no captions/context – presumably documenting a delivery of food and supplies by Israeli peace activists to Palestinian refugee communities]
- 4-2 Jews for a Just Peace 1988-90
- 4-3 League for Total Disarmament (2nd round) 1982-85
- 4-4 Libertarian Forum 1950-66
- 4-5 Missile Crisis [Cuba] 1962-63
- 4-6 New Israel Fund / N.I.F. 2010
- 4-7 New School 1963-92
- 4-8 Peace Fund Correspondence 1983
- 4-9 [Socialist publications] [ca. 1955-2004] [found loose]
- 4-10 [Socialist writings and publications] 1989-97 [found loose]
- 4-11 Solidarnosc (Falkland – Malvinas) 1982-83
- 4-12 [Songs and other works by Norman Epstein] [n.d.] [found loose]
- 4-13 Strata-title 1986

PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER MEDIA

Compact disk

N. Epstein Presentation – CSChE – Edmonton 2007

Photographs (UBC 200.1)

- UBC 200.1/1 Visit of the Canadian Accreditation Board Team for Engineering to Royal Roads Military College [Norman Epstein, 2nd left]. – 16 x 10.5 cm BW print. – 26 November 1982
- UBC 200.1/2 [Norman Epstein lecturing at IDS-96 conference, Krakow, Poland]. – 12.5 x 9 cm colour print. – 1996
- UBC 200.1/3 Arad, Israel – Solid Particles Interdisciplinary Research Encounter (SPIRE). – 14 x 9 cm BW print. – December 1975
- Norman Epstein seated far right
- UBC 200.1/4 [Norman Epstein with] Yang Li [former student?]. – 15 x 10 cm colour print. – November 1992
- UBC 200.1/5 Gordon Wilcox and Norman Epstein at Class of 1958 Reunion. – 15 x 10 cm colour print. – 24 May 2008
- courtesy of Don Gunning
- UBC 200.1/6a,b,c [Norman Epstein with unidentified colleagues]. – 3 11.5 x 8 cm colour prints. – 16 December 1976
- visitors from China?
- UBC 200.1/7 [Norman Epstein, 2nd from left, with unidentified friends or colleagues, Calgary 1994]. – 12.5 x 9 cm colour print. – 1994
- UBC 200.1/8 [Norman Epstein with Rickey[?] Lord]. – 11.5 x 9 cm colour print. – 1984.
- UBC 200.1/9 [Kay Stockholder with Rickey[?] Lord]. – 11.5 x 9 cm colour print. – 1984.
- Kay Stockholder was Norman Epstein's partner
- UBC 200.1/10 [Norman Epstein at party with friends and colleagues]. – 15 x 10 cm colour print. – [n.d.]
- UBC 200.1/11 [Norman Epstein with cake at party]. – 10 x 15 cm colour print. – [n.d.]
- UBC 200.1/12 [Norman Epstein with others at dinner party]. – 15 x 10 cm colour print. – [n.d.]
- Norman Epstein 2nd from right, Kay Stockholder far right